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# Ford 'angry' at Congress over leak on CIA financing of Italian parties

Washington Bureau of The Sun

Washington—The White House said yesterday that President Ford was "angry" over disclosures that the Central Intelligence Agency had funneled at least \$6 million over the last month to anti-Communist leaders in Italy to prevent further Communist gains.

Ronald H. Nessen, the President's press secretary, said that there were "strong suspicions" in the White House "that the leaks of the allegations originated in Congress."

Informed sources said the material was leaked by members of congressional committees or their staffs to the New York Times and the Washing-

ton Post, which published the stories in yesterday's editions.

Other sources, at the White House, said that the President "boiled" when he read the newspaper accounts. They said his anger was directed at Capitol Hill for disclosing the information.

At his news briefing, Mr. Nessen said that the leaks raised "some question" about how the administration can deal responsibly with Congress on intelligence matters. The administration is obligated under a 1974 law to brief designated members of Congress on covert intelligence activities. William E. Colby, director of central intelligence, briefed congressional committees a month ago on

the situation involving the funds for anti-Communist politicians in Italy. He was reported to have asked that the information be kept secret.

The CIA declined comment on the stories. A spokesman for the Senate Intelligence Committee said the panel was investigating the CIA financing of the Italian politicians but had not been informed of the recent payments.

"It's an example of covert activity that we're interested in," the spokesman said.

Mr. Nessen said, "The President is angry by seeing these allegations in print."

"The mere publication of allegations, whether true or not," he added, "do damage to American foreign policy. These allegations in print undermine our capability to carry out our foreign policy."

Mr. Nessen declined to comment in the accuracy of the reports because of the policy of avoiding public disclosure of covert intelligence activities.

The reported Italian operation comes after the Senate voted 54 to 22 last month to cut off covert CIA funds for the anti-Communist factions in Angola. The U.S. role in Angola aroused criticism on Capitol Hill over such clandestine funding.

Aside from embarrassment to the administration, sources said that the leak could further damage the unstable position of Italy's ruling Christian Democratic party. Premier Aldo Moro, head of the Christian Democrats, and his minority coalition government resigned last night following withdrawal of parliamentary support by the Socialist party.

On Capitol Hill, members of committees that were briefed by Mr. Colby declined comment.